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TO: LEA and ISD Superintendents, High School Principals, Directors
and Authorizers of Public School Academies

FROM: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D.
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DATE: September 29, 2005

SUBJ: MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL MERIT EXAM

At several recent conferences at which I made presentations, I encountered some misconceptions about the Michigan Merit Exam. I would like to clear these up.

- The ACT test that will be at the core of the new MME will be the actual ACT. It will not be a special version for Michigan.
- Because it is the actual ACT and will be administered in schools under testing conditions approved by ACT, a student's score will count for admission to post-secondary institutions in Michigan. It is not true that, for college admissions purposes, students will still have to take the ACT in a Saturday session administered by ACT staff. There may be a few students (those wishing to qualify for an NCAA athletic scholarship or apply to a service academy such as West Point) who will need to take the ACT on a nationally-scheduled Saturday.
- There will be no charge to students or the school for administration of the ACT, the Work Keys, or the other assessment tests that are part of the MME. Each student will also get one retake at state expense.
- The total testing time allowed for administration of the MME is eight (8) hours. The ACT portion of the MME is, however, timed.
- The MME has four components:
 - The ACT assessment
 - Work Keys
 - A Social Studies test (similar to the MEAP high school test)
 - A Science test (similar to the MEAP high school test)

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- The MME will be administered on two statewide testing days in the spring. A makeup testing period will be held two weeks later for students who were not in attendance for either day of the initial MME testing.
- Each student with a disability or English language learner will need to apply individually for testing accommodations. ACT will determine which students qualify for accommodations that qualify the student for a college reportable score, and those who will receive a state accommodation who will be counted as “participating” under NCLB but will not receive a college reportable score.
- Each high school will need to name a high school test coordinator, who will be trained in test administration procedures and who in turn will train the test administrators and proctors. Each high school will also need to name an accommodations coordinator to facilitate the requests for accommodations.
- Each high school will need to complete an application to be a test site for the 2006-07 school year. ACT sets conditions for the administration of the ACT assessments in school, and this application will determine which schools meet the ACT conditions.
- Starting in the 2006-07 school year, students seeking to dual enroll will need to take either the ACT Plan or the College Board PSAT assessment. Students or schools will pay for the program, determine which test(s) to administer, and determine when the tests will be given. The state will determine the passing score for each test.

More information about the MME will be forthcoming from the Department and ACT team later this fall. Although a small number of high schools will be participating in a statistical alignment of the MME tests with the MEAP High School Assessments, the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability plans to provide extensive information on the logistics of the MME to all schools, so that each high school can begin to plan for the implementation of the MME statewide in spring 2007.